REMARKS

Applicants wishes to express their sincere appreciation for the time that Examiner Torres spent with Applicant's representative during a telephone conversation on May 14, 2003 regarding the outstanding Office Action. It is believed that certain issues were identified during the telephone conversation and that these issues have been resolved herein. During the conversation, the Examiner clarified the Office Action by explaining the meaning of the rejections therein. In this regard, the Examiner seemed to indicate that it would be beneficial for Applicants to make certain amendments to maintain consistent terminology throughout the specification. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that Examiner carefully consider this response and amendment.

Response to Objections to the Specification

During the telephone interview, the Examiner seemed to indicate that parts of the summary (p. 7, lines 1-2) include the term "test sequence" and that the term "test vector" is not consistent with p. 3, lines 6-7. Therefore, the specification has been amended to change "test sequence" to "test vector" in order to accommodate the Examiner's concerns. In addition, the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4 has been amended to provide a clarification of the background to the present invention.

Concerning the issue of a contradiction between p. 3, lines 6-7 and p. 7, lines 1-2, the Applicants respectfully disagree. A "test vector" is defined in the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4 as a string of logic values (bits). A "test sequence" is defined as a series of test vectors. Thus, it logically follows that if a test sequence is a series of test vectors and a test vector is a string of bits, then a test sequence contains a plurality of bits. Although Applicants believe that there is no contradiction, the specification has been amended in order to maintain consistent terminology throughout and by using term "test vector" where applicable in place of test sequence.

Response to Objection to the Abstract

The abstract has been objected to as being contradictory with the definition of test sequences in the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4. The abstract has also been amended to replace "test sequence" with "test vector" in order to maintain consistency with the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4. However, Applicants disagree that the test

sequence "containing a plurality of bits" contradicts the definition provided in the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4 since a test sequence is a series of test vectors and a text vector is a string of bits. This logic leads to the conclusion that a test sequence contains a plurality of bits.

Response to 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph Rejection

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph for contradictory statements in the specification. Again, Applicants disagree that the test sequence "containing a plurality of bits" contradicts the definition provided in the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4 since a test sequence is defined as a series of test vectors and a text vector is defined as a string of bits, therefore leading to the conclusion that a test sequence contains a plurality of bits. However, the claims have been amended to maintain consistency with the provided definitions.

Response to 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph Rejection

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as omitting the relationship between a "test sequence" and "a plurality of bits." Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the relationship can be found in the paragraph starting on p. 3, line 4 in which a test sequence is defined as a series of test vectors and a text vector is defined as a string of bits. Therefore, it logically follows that a test sequence contains a plurality of bits. Nevertheless, the claims have been amended to maintain consistency with terms defined in the specification.

The Examiner objected to the term "test sequence" in the claims since "test vector" should be used in place of "test sequence." In response, the claims have been amended by making this particular change in order to accommodate the Examiner's concerns.

Applicants wish to clarify that the foregoing amendments have been made for the purpose of better defining the invention in response to the rejections made under 35 U.S.C. §112. Applicant submits that no substantive limitations have been added to the claims based on prior art. Therefore, no prosecution history estoppel arises from these amendments.

Response to Examiner's Arguments

The Office Action states that p. 3, lines 4-12 "explicitly cites, 'a test sequence is a series of test vectors, hence a test sequence consists of a sequence of elements called test vectors.'" However, the specification does not include the phrase "hence a test sequence consists of a sequence of elements called test vectors." The Office Action then states that "a sequence is not even a set, hence it is not even clear what could be meant by a sequence containing elements, that is, sets contain elements sequences consist of elements." The relevance of these statements to the present application is unclear. However, according to the clarification of the rejection made during the telephone interview, the Examiner seemed to indicate that certain amendments, as made herein, would overcome the objections and rejections.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed and/or accommodated, and that the pending claims 1-20 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned agent at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn W. Brown

Glenn W. Brown
Reg. No. 51,310

THOMAS, KAYDEN,
HORSTEMEYER & RISLEY, L.L.P.
Suite 1750
100 Galleria Parkway N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30339
(770) 933-9500

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on June 9, 2003.

Evelyn Sanders
Signature